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99/XX. UNFPA: Multi-year planning, management and funding framework

The Executive Board:

1. Reaffirms its decision 98/24 on the United Nations Population Fund funding strategy in which, inter alia, it decided that UNFPA should develop a multi-year funding framework that integrates programme objectives, resources, budget and outcomes, with the objective of increasing core resources, and in this context takes note with appreciation of the report of the Executive Director on the multi-year planning, management and funding framework (DP/FPA/1999/CRP.2);

2. Welcomes the steps which the United Nations Population Fund has taken to implement decision 98/24 and requests the Executive Director to continue to develop the multi-year planning, management and funding framework, taking into account the views of the Executive Board in this regard and fully respecting the principles contained in decision 98/24;

3. Requests the Executive Director to aim to submit to the Executive Board at its first regular session 2000 the first multi-year framework, 2000-2003; and decides to hold the first funding session as outlined in paragraph 11(b) of decision 98/24 at its second regular session 2000;

4. Requests the Executive Director, in further developing the multi-year planning, management and funding framework beyond 2000, to ensure that the funding session and the annual reporting on the framework are both held at the second regular session in accordance with the principles contained in decision 98/24;

5. Requests the Executive Director to continue to hold regular open-ended informal consultations with States members of the United Nations Population Fund on the further development and implementation of the multi-year planning, management and funding framework.

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UNFPA

REPORTS TO THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Draft report

UNFPA report

1. In introducing the report of the Executive Director to the Economic and Social Council (DP/FPA/1999/5), the Executive Director underscored the full commitment of UNFPA to all United Nations coordination and collaboration mechanisms. She stated that the Fund was a very active partner in the many processes by which coordination was pursued, either within the context of the entire United Nations system - through the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) mechanisms, the Secretary-General's Executive Committees, and notably the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) - or via a number of other consultations and arrangements, such as the recent high-level consultations between WHO and UNFPA. She emphasized that the Fund actively cooperated with all United Nations partners and civil society in helping to implement, in a coherent, complementary and integrated manner, the agreements reached at the United Nations global conferences of the 1990s.

2. Noting that the Economic and Social Council session in 1998 was a landmark in many ways, she drew the attention of the Executive Board to a number of highlights: the special session on an integrated follow-up to the United Nations global conferences of the 1990s; the far-reaching discussions on the triennial comprehensive policy review at the annual session of the Council; the decision to schedule a special session in May 1999 on basic indicators; and the adoption by the Council of key themes for 1999 that reflected the priorities of Member States, including the role of employment and work in poverty eradication, the empowerment and advancement of women and the development of Africa.

3. The Executive Director pointed out that the report to the Council covered a wide range of issues, including the triennial comprehensive policy review and its follow-up; progress on the reform of the Secretary-General; follow-up activities to the United Nations conferences, including the ICPD+5 review and assessment; the many initiatives being pursued within UNDG, including the

resident coordinator system; the question of resources for population programmes; and humanitarian/emergency operations. She drew attention to the section in the report focusing on the cooperation and collaboration among UNFPA and the Bretton Woods institutions and noted that the Fund had actively pursued consultations with the World Bank at both the headquarters and field levels. She observed that she had already discussed the Comprehensive Development Framework (CDF) under an earlier agenda item.

4. The Executive Director underscored that work was progressing well within the UNDG and the revised guidelines on the common country assessment (CCA) as well as the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) were being issued. She pointed out that the CCA and the UNDAF processes provided a key opportunity to address absorptive capacity issues and to plan for national capacity-building. While noting the Fund's committed and active involvement in the UNDAF process, at both the headquarters and field levels, and its willingness to deploy the resources required to help to achieve results, the Executive Director observed that the exercise was demanding and time-consuming and UNFPA staff resources were about one quarter the size of its sister organizations. She concluded by paying tribute to the Administrator of UNDP for his commitment to United Nations reform and his leadership in chairing UNDG.

5. During the ensuing discussion, delegations focused mainly on the following issues: the quality of the report; the commitment to United Nations reform, including involvement in UNDAF and UNDG; the Fund's partnerships with other development partners; and the need to reduce the reporting burden on programme countries.

6. Several delegations commented favourably on the quality of the report and commended it for being analytical, concise and informative. Some delegations observed that the report should be more analytical and recommended that the model of the UNDP report should be followed, with a focus on providing lessons learned and recommendations. A number of delegations were pleased to note the common format of the UNFPA and UNDP reports and stated that it facilitated the discussion. While some delegations favoured having separate reports from UNFPA and UNDP, noting that that arrangement allowed the two organizations to express their particular points of view, other delegations supported the idea of a joint report to the Council and pointed out that a consolidated report would avoid repetition.

7. Several delegations commended the Fund's strong commitment to United Nations reform and the renewed emphasis given to it in the report and also commended the Fund's involvement in the UNDAF process. They noted that good progress was being made on United Nations reform within UNDG, notably in the area of UNDAF, and were pleased with the active and supportive role UNFPA had been carrying out in that regard. One delegation proposed submitting country programmes to the United Nations country team for analysis to ensure that the country programmes were coherent and in line with the UNDAF guidelines. Another delegation strongly supported the use of UNDAF as the long-term development instrument in post-emergency situations.

8. A number of delegations expressed views on the complementarity and/or overlap of the UNDAF and the CDF (see paragraphs __ to __ for that discussion).

9. One delegation, while recognizing the Fund's key role in designing programmes that assist countries in meeting the goals of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), stated that UNFPA also had an important role to play in the follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women. The delegation added that the report should have highlighted results in the area of gender.

10. Several delegations underscored the importance of the Fund's partnerships with other United Nations entities and civil society organizations. While commending the Fund's collaboration with the Bretton Woods institutions, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other development partners, some delegations stated that collaboration with the United Nations regional commissions should be enhanced. Another delegation stated that the Fund should use the regional commissions to assist in implementing the ICPD Programme of Action and noted that the commissions could serve as substantive partners, contributing their technical expertise and knowledge of the region to operational activities. One delegation stated that the Executive Board should recommend more in-depth collaboration with the regional commissions. Another delegation noted that specific mention should have been made in the report of the Fund's collaboration and cooperation with the Commission on Population and Development, including in the ICPD+5 process. One delegation highlighted the importance of working with civil society, including grass-roots organizations, in programme implementation, and noted that such collaboration resulted in reduced costs, better follow-up and strengthened grass-roots communities. The delegation added that both his country and UNFPA had reaped benefits from such collaboration.

11. A number of delegations shared the Fund's concern, expressed in the report, that the reporting burden on programme countries should be reduced and reporting requirements should be simplified. One delegation, while noting that UNDG and UNDAF should not create undue burden on field offices, cautioned that coordination should not distract agencies from their original mandates.

12. One delegation, referring to paragraph 8 of the report, stated that it did not consider the establishment of data bases to be vital to the monitoring of conference goals. The delegation pointed out that the role that the Fund had been correctly playing went far beyond a restricted monitoring approach and focused on providing financial and technical resources to programme countries to assist them in achieving conference goals. The delegation agreed that the main constraint faced in implementing the ICPD Programme of Action and the Beijing Platform for Action was the lack of financial and human resources. The delegation added that it fully shared the conclusions expressed in paragraphs 39 and 40 regarding the gender implications and disproportionate impact on women of the privatization of social services and the globalization of the world economy.

13. The Executive Director thanked the delegations for their frank and constructive comments and questions. She acknowledged that the UNDP report was better than the Fund's report and assured the Board that for the following year UNFPA would produce a more analytical report with lessons learned included. She added that a joint report from UNDG would also be presented to the Council. She fully agreed with the observation that the Beijing Platform for Action was important for the work of the Fund, particularly as it included key areas and issues advanced by the ICPD Programme of Action. She noted that she would

continue to consult with the United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women concerning the Beijing follow-up process. Also, regarding the general process of conference follow-up, the Executive Director proposed a much stronger utilization of the horizontal follow-up mechanisms, including, inter alia, the effective use and promotion of the outputs of the ACC Task Force on Basic Social Services for All.

14. She welcomed the suggestion that the country programmes should be reviewed by the country team and underscored that UNFPA had long been a proponent of such an approach, particularly as it helped to identify needs, gaps and overlaps while also providing opportunities to contribute to common goals. She added that the Fund also emphasized the fundamental importance of consultations with Governments, other development partners and stakeholders, including NGOs and other members of civil society. She affirmed that the Fund's country programme process was based on national ownership and leadership and reflected national priorities. She noted that the Fund had a very focused mandate and hoped that the UNDAF process would be one vehicle for development partners to give active support to ICPD goals. She agreed with the delegation that had underscored the importance of and the benefits deriving from working with grass-roots organizations and community groups and also agreed that it should be reflected in the report. She assured the Executive Board that the Fund had a very good collaborative relationship with the regional commissions and she concurred with the view that the role of the commissions in conference follow-up could be enhanced. She added that the Deputy Secretary-General was holding consultations on that and related matters.

15. The Executive Director underscored that multilateral grant assistance should be channelled through the United Nations system. Emphasizing the need to rationalize and streamline various coordination processes, she wondered if it was necessary to come up with yet another new process. She did not agree with the distinction drawn by the representative of the World Bank that the CDF was a development tool and the UNDAF was a planning tool. She stressed that UNDAF was definitely a development tool and that promoting development and building national capacity in programme countries was the raison d'être of the United Nations operational activities. On the relationship between the United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions, in particular the World Bank, the Executive Director underscored the fundamental importance of Member States giving consistent instructions to their representatives at the United Nations and at the World Bank and concurred with the delegations who had expressed that view.

16. She agreed with the delegations that had underlined the need to reduce the reporting burden on programme countries. She noted that during her recent visit to Viet Nam, she had learned how an overwhelming reporting burden had been rationalized and streamlined through the work of a theme group on reproductive health, chaired by UNFPA, so that instead of providing separate reports on over 50 donor-supported projects, it would now be possible to report on the basis of a few selected indicators. Most importantly, the effort had enabled the Government to utilize the new reporting mechanisms for its own management of the programme.

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UNDP

REPORTS TO THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Draft report

UNDP report

1. The Administrator introduced his report to the Economic and Social Council (DP/1999/10). He noted that the report had been prepared in compliance with General Assembly resolutions 53/192, 50/120, and 47/199, as well as Economic and Social Council resolutions 1994/33 and 1998/27. UNDP had taken special care in preparing the report to address the new standards and requirements that the Executive Board had set in 1998, in particular those calling for a more analytical report indicating lessons learned and problems. In addition, the report included recommendations for action by the Economic and Social Council. An approach and format that was common to UNFPA, the United Nations Children's Fund, and the World Food Programme, had been utilized, while allowing for each fund to highlight aspects that were particularly relevant to its areas of operation.

2. The Administrator reviewed the highlights of the report and then made brief remarks relating to the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and the World Bank's Comprehensive Development Framework (CDF).

3. With regard to UNDAF, the challenge would be twofold, he explained, to ensure a strategic and holistic framework. UNDAF was designed to bring greater coherence, collaboration, and effectiveness to the United Nations development efforts at the country level. The synthesis of agreements reached at the United Nations summits and conferences in the 1990s had laid the basis for a strong, legitimate vision of support to programme countries through UNDAF. All United Nations organizations had important roles to play in a team effort. A periodic update on the progress in pursuing United Nations reform proposals, prepared by

the United Nations Development Group Office, was made available to the Executive Board.

4. The Administrator noted that with regard to the CDF, the approach based on country ownership should be distinguished from models that sought to weld the international community together into one unified monolithic force, which was not a healthy prospect; CDF should not be such an instrument. Experience had shown that the United Nations development effort, in its independent thinking, non-conditionality and country ownership, was very valuable. Development cooperation agencies should offer options to programme countries, and those countries could have legitimate concerns regarding the emergence of a tight coalition of all external partners.

5. The Administrator underlined that the purpose of the CDF should not be confused with that of UNDAF. The CDF should not be seen as superseding UNDAF, as the latter was designed to bring greater coherence, collaboration, and effectiveness to the United Nations development effort at the country level.

6. Work on the country cooperation assessments (CCAs) and UNDAFs would continue as planned. The CCA/UNDAF process, which had been endorsed by the General Assembly, was designed to strengthen both the strategic value and coherence of United Nations development cooperation. The process should provide a solid foundation for United Nations country teams to engage in a dialogue with national partners and the World Bank on the CDF. Likewise, Governments could continue to encourage the World Bank to contribute to, and participate in, the CCA/UNDAF guidelines to be issued shortly. Finally, it was for Member States to decide what programming tools they wished to utilize and the role that they wanted the international community to play.

7. The Administrator briefed the Executive Board on the outcome of the first session of 1999 of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC), which had included the approval of a guidance note prepared in the Consultative Committee on Programme and Operational Questions (CCPOQ) on the CCA/UNDAF process. The guidance note encouraged the enhanced involvement of specialized agencies in the process, including through their governing bodies.

Discussion

8. Many delegations took the floor to congratulate UNDP on its report, which they described as analytical, problem-oriented and very useful, in particular through its recommendations, to the discussions at the Economic and Social Council. The report fulfilled the provisions of General Assembly, Economic and Social Council and Executive Board legislation, and could serve as a model for reporting to the Council by funds and programmes. The recommendations could be the subject of an informal discussion at the Council.

9. United Nations Development Assistance Framework. Many speakers addressed the role of the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) and UNDAF in furthering United Nations reform in the operational activities area, expressing strong support for the CCA/UNDAF process. Continued collaboration at the inter-agency level was strongly emphasized, with speakers underlining the need for specialized agencies to participate in the UNDAF process. The recent decision

by ACC in that regard was welcomed. The need for UNDAF to meet the needs of programme countries and reflect their priorities was emphasized by many delegations, as was the need to ensure that UNDAF developed into a strategic document. With regard to the recommendations on UNDAF contained in paragraph 33 (b), several speakers questioned the wording regarding coordination, stating that it should refer to coordination "with" other donors, and not "of" other donors. Some speakers expressed the hope that UNDG would coordinate increasingly with the other sectoral reform groups created by the Secretary-General. Other delegations underlined the need to involve civil society, including non-governmental organizations, in the UNDAF process. More information on the outcome of the evaluation of the pilot UNDAFs would be welcomed.

10. Resident coordinator system. Several speakers praised the progress made in strengthening the resident coordinator system, in particular with regard to the competency-based selection process, integrated training and increased inter-agency participation. There was general support for the recommendations contained in document DP/1999/10 on the resident coordinator system.

11. Funding. Speakers underlined the progress seen in designing a funding strategy for the organization, one that would ensure greater predictability and linkage between resources and results. Many delegations emphasized the great importance attached to meeting the funding targets set for contributions to the core. Support was expressed for the text contained in paragraph 8 of document DP/1999/10.

12. Comprehensive Development Framework. Many speakers commented on the implications of the CDF for the United Nations. Some expressed concern about how the CDF would affect the success of UNDAF, as well as how the CDF could impact on the objective of UNDAF to simplify procedures at the country level, both for Governments and country-based staffs of international organizations. The CDF was seen as distinct from UNDAF although there could be overlap in some areas. Many speakers stated that they would reserve their views on the CDF pending the outcome of discussions within the World Bank. There was support for further consultations between the United Nations and the World Bank in order to avoid duplication and ensure complementarity. Speakers underlined the need for real partnership between UNDP and the World Bank. However, the views of delegations differed with regard to the recommendation contained in paragraph 33 (d), in which collaboration was encouraged with the World Bank on the UNDAF process and the CDF. Further information was requested on how UNDAF and the CDF would relate to the country strategy note.

13. The representative of the World Bank stated that cooperation between the World Bank and UNDP was positive on both the operational and institutional levels. A standing dialogue existed with UNDP on a variety of issues of mutual concern. The World Bank was currently engaged in a dialogue with the United Nations on the CDF. He noted that the rationale, design and implementation of the CDF and UNDAF were different. The World Bank did not wish to marginalize UNDAF but rather to strengthen it.

14. Regional cooperation. Many delegations emphasized the importance of UNDP support to regional cooperation, especially through the regional economic and

social commissions. Interregional cooperation, including technical cooperation among developing countries, was also important.

15. Common premises and services. Several delegations stated that common premises should be utilized only where effective, an element recognized in the triennial policy review. More information on the possibility of increasing common services was requested by some delegations.

16. Gender balance. Many speakers expressed support for the progress of UNDP towards achieving the gender-balance targets in the organization. One delegation raised a query about why mid-level professional women had been leaving the organization in disproportionate numbers during the downsizing process.

17. Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits. Several references included in document DP/1999/10 on this subject were strongly supported by speakers, including that contained in paragraph 56 regarding concern about the lack of realization of funding expectations generated by the conferences, and that in paragraph 59 (a) concerning the need to call upon governing bodies of United Nations entities to consider devoting specific resources to horizontal follow-up. The role of UNDP in follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development was particularly important. One delegation questioned the reference in paragraph 59 linking follow-up to conferences with UNDAFs.

18. Follow-up to special economic, humanitarian and disaster relief assistance. Delegations addressed the role of UNDAF as an instrument for creating a disaster-relief assistance framework, the importance of a comprehensive approach to humanitarian assistance with the involvement of all actors, and the creation of flexible mechanisms for crisis countries. One delegation requested that care be taken in the use of terminology that had not been accepted by intergovernmental consensus.

19. Format and design of report. While many speakers welcomed the common format of the reports of UNDP and UNFPA, some speakers suggested that one consolidated report would be more useful for discussion in the Economic and Social Council. Other delegations supported the continuation of producing two separate reports. In either case, the reporting should continue to focus on selected subjects and duplication between the two reports should be avoided as much as possible.

Response

20. The Administrator stated that it was important for the World Bank to clarify the role and intent of the CDF in relation to the concerns raised regarding the CCA/UNDAF process. He underlined the ambiguity surrounding the CDF in that there were currently many different views concerning its purpose and role. The consultation process between the United Nations and World Bank would help to clarify the issues. He noted that the CDF could create many demands on programme countries for which UNDP could provide technical cooperation. He looked forward to the further strengthening of the partnership of UNDP with the World Bank.

21. The Administrator stated that he expected the country teams to work together to provide assurances that individual programmes were carried out in cohesion with UNDAF. He noted that the regional economic commissions had participated in the development of the guidelines on UNDAF and had a clear role in the process. Monitoring and evaluation of UNDAF would be limited to an assessment of overall objectives, building on lessons learned by individual agencies. It was not envisaged that non-United Nations system partners would be brought into the UNDAF process but collaboration with those actors in support of country priorities could be enhanced through other means. The results of the evaluation of the pilot UNDAFs would be made available.

22. In response to other comments made, the Administrator noted that mid-career women had left in unexpectedly larger numbers in the latest downsizing owing to factors such as decentralization and family issues. Nevertheless, UNDP was proud of the gender-balance goals it had achieved. With regard to training activities, including those for resident coordinators, he stated that they now included greater inter-agency participation. He informed the Executive Board that more information on the disaster-relief activities of UNDP would be made available at the Economic and Social Council session.

23. The Executive Board took note of the report to the Economic and Social Council (DP/1999/10) and decided to transmit them to the Economic and Social Council with the comments made thereon.

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DRAFT DECISION

99/XX. UNFPA: UNFPA support for reproductive health in emergency situations

The Executive Board:

1. Takes note with appreciation of the report of the Executive Director on UNFPA support for reproductive health in emergency situations (DP/FPA/1999/6);

2. Requests the Executive Director to submit to the Executive Board at its third regular session 1999, taking into account all the views expressed at the second regular session 1999, a report that contains concrete proposals on UNFPA emergency programming procedures.

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DRAFT DECISION

99/XX. UNFPA and sector-wide approaches

The Executive Board:

1. Takes note with appreciation of the report on sector-wide approaches contained in document DP/FPA/1999/CRP.1;

2. Encourages UNFPA to take an active part in the policy-making and planning stages in the sector-wide approaches in programme countries, with the concurrence and the overall guidance of national Governments, and to take an important advocacy role regarding reproductive and sexual health services and reproductive rights in such processes, taking into account the principles of the ICPD Programme of Action;

3. Requests UNFPA, in this context, to broaden and strengthen the competencies required to secure full and active participation of UNFPA in the policy-making and planning stages in sector-wide approaches, and to strengthen arrangements to access a full range of technical expertise;

4. Requests UNFPA to consider further, in consultation with partners, challenges and opportunities for a full-fledged involvement by UNFPA in the sector-wide approaches and to examine the need for changes of administrative and financial regulations, if any, that could facilitate the involvement of UNFPA, taking into account the multi-year funding framework;

5. Requests the Executive Director to present to the Executive Board at its second regular session 2000 a conference room paper on the involvement of UNFPA in sector-wide approaches.

___ April 1999